"a divorced girl, a decoy partridge, they are leading astray"; "a divorced girl, a cọḍgọć[64] fish, they do not remain in one place". 587 [539]

If a widower or a divorced man marries a spinster, her parents will take a brideprice of five or seven rupees for good, that is to say, the bridegroom does not get anything in return. The marriage is performed as between bachelor and spinster.

Formerly bachelors did not marry widows or divorced women, and also nowadays this is not in accordance with the rule; still nowadays a few men marry such persons, because the age has become depraved. Those who marry a widow or a divorced woman have to pay only half the brideprice, and the Jọg Mạńjhi gets eight annas as marriage fee. The village headman gets nothing. Cloth for the mother, cloths for the grandmothers there is nothing of, and presents and the like are absent also; there is no bathing and hair-washing, no going and coming either. This is no real marriage, we call it a temporary hire. The name of such a marriage is saṅgha. The bridegroom does not apply sindur to the bride. Applying sindur to a flower, he with his left hand sticks this into the bride's hair. This is saṅgha (marrying a widow or divorced woman). No feast has to be given either, the bridegroom gives only a couple of people some beer.

Girls who get a child while being spinsters they call cupi chạḍwi, tail-divorced. Any one who marries such a girl, pays a brideprice as for a divorced girl. But the marriage is performed as a marriage with a spinster. 848

j. Running in.

If in any village a young man and a girl have become of one mind, the girl will inform the Jọg Mạńjhi of this. Having found out what the young man wishes, the Jọg Mạńjhi takes the girl into the house of the young man's parents. A couple of days afterwards the parents tell the village headman. They come together and have a talk. They ask the girl and the young man what they intend. If these two say they are willing and agree, they separate them and fix a day for the marriage. The village community gets five four-anna bits. The marriage is performed like other marriages. 583

If any young man and girl have sexual intercourse, and the young man afterwards is unwilling to marry her, the girl will run in to the young man, forcing her way in. If the young man professes to marry her, in this case their marriage is performed as with the above run-in girl. But if the young man will not agree to marry her, he will in accordance with the decision of the village council have to pay the girl three rupees, and the village council will fine the father of the young man and the father of the girl each five four-anna bits. When the girl has got the money, the Jọg Mạńjhi will take her to the house of her parents. 583 836

[64] Ophiocephalus gachua, Ham. Buch.

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105 182 431 being an evidence of fraternal virtues of co-operation.

105 181 421 836 Although ideas of individualism have saturated the Santal social fabric and they now own private property, and have personal ownership over many things, communistic ideas in origin can be easily traced in the custom which allows all bachelors of the tribe to have free access and intercourse with the unmarried girls of the tribe barring of course customary prohibited degrees and relations.

105 593 Evidence of discipline in family life can be easily noticed. Their heads of families are held in great esteem and their commands are carried out [611] respectfully. Although the family is patrilineal and patripotestal, the mother has her natural voice in the family-life and women, notwithstanding all their legal disabilities, have their moral rights assured.

105 181 582 Nowhere is the democratic authority of the appointed guardians of the tribe in better evidence than in the cases of marriage regulations. It is in the administration of these that we can see the will of the Santals finds fullest play. We have seen in the foregoing pages how clan-incest is detested and how the erring ones undergo penance and restored to the tribe. It is the tribal council, the sacred [623] repository of all customs and traditions, that main-[684] tains intact the tribal solidarity and purity by out-casting the man and woman who have become

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572 838 arising out of such ties and Santals are emphatic that there are no cases of homo-sexual aberrations.

836 In sex-life, unmarried women, divorcees and widows enjoy equal freedom with men to cohabit with men of their choice, barring of course the prohibited degrees of marriage and the clan rules of exogamy. But excessive cases are taken notice of [848] by parents and superiors, and if pregnancy results, village elders step in to find out the man responsible. Very frequently such scandals are avoided by a marriage between the parties.

837 The Santal hates adultery. If a married woman cohabits with others, she is taken to task by her parents and her husband's people. Generally, such erring wives are divorced by the husband. Serious crimes like murders sometimes result from such offences and we remember an educated Santal nonchalantly blurting out, "if my wife commits adultery, I shall cut her into pieces." The following folk-song contains the news of such an illicit union being conveyed to a maternal uncle by his nephew:— 837 533 539

Nephew: Eh mama, mamago, hatòmiñdo perkao akan.

Uncle: Nowa katha sakhi bhagna bin purao lekhan.
Hopon bohok're capò hòcòbin.

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Kuṛi: Nalo miluàm rag ase, nalo miluàm rò̤ ase,
Sindur lugriñ bhanduṛgiḍi bohok' sinduriñ koṭagiḍi.
Naṛho miluà nalañ dò sedac leka ge.

(Translated)

Boy: From childhood we were in love, from childhood we were united in affection;
You have now given up that tie of love.

Girl: Don't weep, my love, don't speak about it, my beloved!
I shall throw away the vermilion-cloth, I *shall brush off the vermilion* from my head:
We shall again unite in love as heretofore.

836 The cases, however, of unmarried boys and girls stand on a special footing of their own. The evidence at our disposal goes to show that the "dangua koṛa" and "dangua kuṛi" (unmarried boys and girls) are sexually free (barring the clan-exogamy and the prohibited degrees of marriage). Within this restriction they can commit any amount of "Lò̤ghò̤ṭi" (fornication) with absolute freedom, if opportunities are suitable.

836 539 533 A number of folk-songs can be made to illustrate the pre-marital romance between the boys and girls of the tribe. Here is a rich man's daughter asking

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a youth belonging to a humbler way of life to meet her in secret:

Kuṛi: Kisàṇṛale mente babu ja,
Nale noṛak' cun dokta jomja koṛa bape hijuk' do.

Koṛa: Engam maire egerdoe
Apum maire roṛdoe oñatege bale hijuk' do.

Kuri: Engaiñgesepe lajaockan
Apuingesepe bòroaikan.
Siñgaṛ sanu reja babu seteṛope.
Bale kari mela horte capo capote capobòlòpe,
Enrehoiñ ja babu dhamak dhari
Sad do bachare bhangaokatimpe.

(Translated)

Girl: Because, we are rich, O my love,
You don't come to ours to take lime and tobacco.

Boy: Your mother rebukes me. Your father reproaches me. So, I do not come.

Girl: You are shy of mother, you are afraid of (my) father.
At half-past ten at night, O my love, reach here.
Do come crawling through the shed where young buffaloes are kept tied;
Take all these troubles to quench my love-appetite.

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This is how a neglected maid sings:

Gai gupiko panja panja,
Gai gupiko bako dedèṛdò.
Kaḍa gupiko panja panja,
Kada gupiko bako dedèṛdò.
Hape hapeniñ sakòm lenge,
Hape hapeniñ sankha lenge,
Ròhòṛ gàḍià ḍheṅka leke giñ
koyok' nocòpe.

(Translated)

I ran after the cow-herd boy, he did not commit coitus with me.
I went after the buffalo-boy, he did not cohabit with me.
When I shall make ornaments for my wrists,
When I shall make shell-bracelets for my wrists,
I shall compel glances at me like the crane (ḍheṅka) at dried-up ponds.

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Some old Santals of Baldiha, Mayurbhanj, were not however disposed to concede to the unmarried girl equal freedom in premarital sexual intercourse with the boys. This handicap on the girls is undoubtedly an influence of Hinduism on the tribe; it appears from the evidence that the original institution of the Santals placed no such restrictions.

000 Whatever that may be, a sane admonition is now

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Whatever that may be, a sane admonition is now given to the erring by sensible parents and we understand that even married men are reproached by their parents or superiors if they indulge in adultery.

Santal women, in sexual matters, are the passive type found in the sex in general. If the term 'masochistic' can be applied to such a nature, they are undoubtedly so. We enquired to find out cases of women possessing a sadistic nature and gathered that instances of women beating men for economic reasons or domestic infidelity are not at all rare. But the witnesses stoutly maintained that such cases had nothing to do with the infliction of pain for the joy of it, and women as a sex do never take the lead in coitus or mastery in cohabitation.

But in married-life, should the husband be sexually unsatisfactory and fail habitually to satisfy the cravings of his wife for intercourse, the wife unfailingly sues for divorce and changes the husband for a more capable one. As one Santal puts it, "Failure to satisfy the sexual passion is the primary reason for divorces. Women can stand starvation in food as she can work and earn it, but if the husband fails to be a satisfactory partner in mating, she will leave him immediately."

The place of sex in the tribal life

Any one visiting a Santal rally at a dance or a festival, we dare say, will be struck with the

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being as it is, intimacy is never left unwatched and unquestioned. Their wives and daughters may dance with any Santal at day time, but at night no decent girl will dance except in the company of her father or husband It is only the flirt, the divorcee or the widow who dances unaccompanied by their elders. Some Santals asserted that wives should dance with their husbands only and never with others, but enquiry revealed that custom lays down no such strict injunction and married couples may dance together or with different partners, but there is the sane restriction that the husband must be present at the dancing-yard. It was stated that the husband and wife may suspect each other if either of them dances with others. So business, relationship and bonafides play their reasonable part in determining whether suspicion should attach to the movements of men and women and if the reasons why two persons of the opposite sexes are meeting together are clear, Santal men and women do not bother their heads with any jealous speculation.

Sexual freedom with the Santals has its own border-line. In course of the previous chapters we have seen that the unmarried boy and girl are sexually free, provided that they do not violate the laws of exogamy and prohibited degrees. So it happens that should a lad be found cohabiting, say, with five girls, he will be simply asked by his elders to make

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836 626 his choice and marry any of them and not to go so wildly about. Exactly, the same step is taken as regards the unmarried girl. They are not tried or punished, if they do not cross the limits of exogamy but should they do so, the laws, as we have seen, are severe.

837 626 Faithless partners are dealt in a way peculiar to the Santal. Should the husband of a girl go wrong with unmarried girls or widows, he is taken to task by sensible parents or village-elders; the tribe takes no social notice of the wrong. But the case of a married woman going wrong with others is tried by the village-elders and should the offence be proved, she is divorced and fined.

833 *The Quality of Love*

Some Santals told us that it is nothing unusual for a newly married couple to indulge in coitus for four times daily before the birth of children. Although with age, this diminishes, twice a day remains as the irreducible average for the Santals. Even in his sixtieth year, it is nothing abnormal for the Santal to enjoy sexual intercourse once a day and with a few this capacity does not leave them even at seventy. Regarding the duration of coitus, the majority opinion for twenty minutes to half-an-hour as the minimum average and individual abnormal claim for three hours (by counting time by the

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Boy: The silver ornaments on your wrists,
the bracelets of silver on my hand,
We shall give to the ferry-man; even then we
two shall go away to foreign countries.

The Dawn of Romance

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It may be interesting at this stage to record the evidence of a middle-aged Santal, who in reply to our questions gave a detailed description of the dawn of love and its working in the hearts of Santal boys and girls, although, we are afraid, there will be some overlapping in the treatment of the subject.

He said, "The first thing that a Santal boy and girl have when meeting together is, what is called, "Bepengeee kusi" (the meeting of the eyes, *Cokshu Priti*, as termed in Sanskrit). Being thus attracted by the eyes, they have two or three glances when they arrive at an understanding. The boy wants to meet the girl who could fascinate him thus." He corroborated that a medium is now selected by the boy, being either his grand-mother, elder brother's wife or an aunt, real or by village-courtesy, and presents are conveyed with his messages of love. "The meeting," he added, "may take place at dances like the "Lagre," when the infatuated youth goes behind the circle where his beloved is dancing and stretches forth his right hand forward,

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535 which is a sign of request for a dance. The knot, where the hand has been stretched, breaks up and allows him to seize the hands of the girl of his choice. Should the understanding be deeper, the boy simply approaches the group and stands; the girl's eyes meet the boy's and she allows him to catch her hands. If the boy is not liked, the girl does not allow him to dance—he has no right to force his presence. Such dances motivate sexual stimulation. Those who desire sexual intercourse, press the wrists of the girl partner. Breasts are also touched and pressed as dancing proceeds with talks of love."

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836 He gave us a very realistic description of the very first meeting of the lovers. Supposing a lad is at a field. A girl is gathering edible leaves. She catches his fancy. The boy takes up a pebble or a flower and throws it towards the girl. The girl feels surprised and exclaims, "Who threw it?"

The boy pleads, "I don't know. Something fell there."

The girl retorts, "I saw you throwing it. Nobody else was here so long. Who could have done it?"

Both of them then smile automatically and with it comes the understanding. The girl

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now says, "So you threw it. Why did you do it?" 832 886

The boy replies, "I meant you no harm."

"Why did you throw it? Tell me."

"I have something to tell you."

"Speak, what you will."

The boy then feigns and mumbles, "I have got a disease. Without you, there is no remedy."

"Name me the disease."

"You know it well enough."

At this stage they seem to know things well enough. The girl may prolong the ostrich shyness for a time. The boy makes his declaration. The girl replies that the spot is not a convenient one and may suggest a more suitable one and appoint a time, for she is ready. Thereafter, they seek opportunities and meet together to have their love-adventure.

Jungle-love

Love-adventures in jungles form the subject of a large number of folk-songs, called Bir Seren. Many of these relate to escapades, first sex-experiences and their results. These will dispense with the necessity of heaps of evidence to provide a correct perspective of the sex-life amongst the youths and maids of the tribe. 83 533

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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582 614 never marries a Murmu female or a Murmu male respectively. Similarly a Tudu male never marries a Besra female and vice verse. An old Santal of Tudu sept told me the following tradition explaining why inter-marriage is not allowed between the Tudu and Besra septs.

582 614 539 Once a woman of Besra sept fell in love with a Tudu man, but the man did not agree to marry as the Besra sept is lower. Then the relatives of the man and woman made an agreement that if between the fight of their sept-animals, buffalo and cock, the cock would lose its life then there would be marriage. On the fixed day before the relatives of the both sides this fight took place. The headman of the village holding the pointed horn of the buffalo in one hand and the cock in another asked the permission of the men on both sides, and when they gave an answer in the affirmative, he let them loose and a fight then ensued between the cock and the buffalo. In the fight the cock took out the two eye-balls of the buffalo with its pointed beak, in consequence of which the buffalo lost its life. Thence no marriage was allowed between the two septs. But now no such restriction can be found.

582 584 836 584 848 Girls are married as adults mostly to men of their own choice. Sexual intercourse before marriage is tolerated ; but if a girl becomes pregnant the young man is bound to marry her. Should he attempt to evade this obligation he would be liable to severe punishment by the Jogmanjhi, and in addition to this his father would be required to pay a heavy fine.

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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Kudam Bapla: If a girl becomes pregnant, the young man by whom she becomes so is bound to marry her. The procedure for this kind of marriage is as follows :— 584 848 [836]

The young man informs the Jogmanjhi of his offence and the girl confesses to the wife of the Jogmanjhi. Then the Jogmanjhi informs the headman of the village and also the parents on both sides. The bridegroom pays twelve rupees and a bull for the bride-price. The Jogmanjhi then takes this couple to the house of the bridegroom's parents with the headman and some other villagers. There they fix the date of the marriage. Then on a fixed day in the house of bridegroom the latter applies vermilion to the forehead of the bride; the bridegroom at the time of applying vermilion stands facing West and the bride facing East. [583]

Kiring-jawae: If the couple belongs to the same sept, the headman of the village calls for a Panchayat, and the decision of the Panchayat will always be negative i.e. no marriage will take place. The boy's father has to bear the expenses of the marriage of the girl to another man. Then the headman of her village arranges her marriage with a boy from a far off village. Here the bridegroom gets a cow and some money from the father of the guilty a boy andhis name is always kept secret. The ceremony is performed by placing the bride on a plate and the bridegroom applies vermilion on the parting of the hair of the bride and a feast is then given to the villagers. 584 848 614 [583]

Ghardi-Jawae Marriage: This kind of marriage is resorted to when a girl is the only child of her parents. When a man has minor sons and grown-up daughter 583

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for his granddaughter in order that she might be settled in life before he passed away. The girl was seven years of age and she was married to a boy of fourteen. Only a token bride price was received. Girls are usually married when they are about sixteen, while young men are generally between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. There is no test of a prospective bride's virginity. The fact that sexual experience of a kind is common before marriage is known to all, though it is not openly or actively encouraged, and a girl who is thought to be a wanton may have to wait for marriage through one of the more irregular channels that are open to her.

The initiative is taken by the parents of the bridegroom. Parents of marriageable girls are not always passive spectators, but any inquiries instituted by them are likely to be tactful and indirect. When the parents of a young man have made tentative inquiries and wish to begin negotiations they engage the services of a friend as a "go-between", known as a *racbaric'*, to visit the home of the prospective bride. He addresses the parents of the girl in some such roundabout manner as the following: "Have you found a place yet for your new cooking pot? I have some friends who are unable to cook their herbs and so they have asked me to find a new cooking pot for them." If the report of this first visit is satisfactory it is followed by an exchange of ceremonial visits. First a party from the bridegroom's village journey to the bride's home. The go-between is accompanied by the young man's parents and some of their friends, a party of five or seven persons in all. Omens by the way are noted, and they are not all left to chance. Before the party enter the bride's village the *racbaric'* goes ahead and tells the people to do nothing that will upset the auspicious nature of the occasion. When leaving their own village or on entering the girl's village, should they see fire, an axe, a woman with a load of wood on her head, a snake or a jackal crossing the path from left to right, they return home and the whole matter is dropped. If, however, they see a full water pot, a cow, a new brass plate, a panniered bullock, the pugmarks of a leopard or a jackal crossing the path from right to left, the omens are good. If all goes well, details of the bride price are fixed, a time is arranged when the bride's relations will pay their return visit and all is sealed by the proferring and acceptance of tobacco and beer.

On their way home from the bride's house the members of the party sing: